

High Blood Sugar (Hyperglycemia)

What is high blood sugar?

In general, a blood sugar reading of more than 180 mg/dL or any reading above your target range is too high. A blood sugar reading of 300 mg/dL or more can be dangerous. If you have 2 readings in a row of 300 or more, call your doctor.

What causes high blood sugar?

Anything that can raise your blood sugar can cause it to go too high. Not having the right dose or kind of diabetes medicine, being ill or stressed, forgetting to take your diabetes pills or insulin, doing less exercise than usual, or eating more carbohydrates than usual are all things that can cause your blood sugar to go too high. Although it is frustrating, blood sugar levels can also be too high for no clear reason. Sometimes these high levels may be the first sign of an infection, illness or stress.

Blood sugar levels can go very high when you are ill. Talk with your health care team about creating a 'sick day plan' to manage your diabetes when you have a cold, flu or other illness.

How will I feel when my blood sugar is too high?

At times you might not notice any symptoms of high blood sugar. Other times, you may feel the way you did when you first had diabetes. You may:

- feel weak and tired
- have blurred vision
- go to the bathroom more often

- have a dry mouth
- be thirsty
- feel nauseated and vomit

If you have any of these symptoms, check your blood sugar level to see if that is the problem. If your blood sugar levels are high for several days, you may also feel hungry, nauseated or dizzy when you stand. If your blood sugar keeps going higher, other people may notice that you act confused. This is an emergency, and you need to go to the hospital right away. If you aren't treated, you can go into a coma.

How can I treat hyperglycemia?

First, drink plenty of water or sugar-free fluid to help "flush" the sugar from your bloodstream. Think about why your blood sugar is high! Blood sugar can be high due to:

- illness or infection
- stress

- missed diabetes medicine
- eating more carbohydrates

• less activity than normal

• a new medicine

If you've just not been in your usual routine, your blood sugar should go back to normal once your routine goes back to normal.

But if you feel ill, see blood sugar over 300 twice in a row, or see blood sugar above your target range for more than a week, then you should call your doctor.

Ask your doctor, nurse or dietitian:

- 1. What is the target range for my blood sugar readings?
- 2. What should I do when my blood sugar readings are too high?
- 3. When should I call you about high blood sugar levels?
- 4. Can you help me to make a sick day plan?

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